

Just this week the Washington Post reports that Congress plans to revisit minimum wage requirements for recipients in public service jobs. Can my colleagues believe it? We argued vigorously on the floor that people should take responsibility for themselves, they should go to work, get off welfare. And yet we want to pay those individuals who get off welfare less than a minimum wage.

There is not an American in America who disagrees that for work, good work, equal work, equal pay, minimum wage. The Lutheran Services in America organization spends \$2.8 billion serving 2 million needy people in over 3,000 locations. They know what poverty is all about. They know what serving the poor is all about. And they want them to be paid minimum wage.

They also know the dignity of being a human being, someone who has pulled themselves up by the boot straps, a welfare mother transitioning from welfare to work. And then we want to denigrate and deny her humanity and pay her below the minimum wage. What a disgrace.

Congress, get in the real world and pay the minimum wage for all working Americans.

CONGRESS SHOULD PASS MEANINGFUL COMPREHENSIVE CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM LEGISLATION

(Ms. WOOLSEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, in his State of the Union Address, President Clinton called on the Congress to pass campaign finance reform by July 4 this year. But today, exactly 1 month before the deadline, the majority leadership still has not acted.

Mr. Speaker, on July 4, 1776, the American colonists declared their independence from England's tyranny. It is time now for Congress to declare independence from the tyranny of big money and special interests.

Mr. Speaker, we have 30 days left to prepare for this day. Let us hold hearings, let us write meaningful legislation and pass comprehensive campaign finance reform. Let us truly light a firecracker for democracy on this July 4.

CONGRESS MUST CONSIDER HONG KONG AS IT DEBATES MFN FOR CHINA

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, the House has begun this very important debate on whether or not we are going to grant most-favored-nation trading status to the People's Republic of China. The question that we have to ask ourselves is where do the 5.5 million free-

dom loving people of Hong Kong stand on this. Because, frankly, if one is in Hong Kong, this is much more than simply a debating exercise.

Hong Kong is a beacon of hope and prosperity and freedom to Asia. As it is transferred to Chinese control in just a couple of weeks, the five and a half million residents face an uncertain future. We have a moral obligation to consider them as we debate MFN.

One unquestionable fact, Mr. Speaker, regarding this MFN debate is that Hong Kong adamantly opposes the United States' cutting off trade with China. Maintaining MFN bolsters Hong Kong's economic value to China, reinforcing their claim to separate treatment. Maintaining trade will also calm the economic concerns of the Hong Kong people at a time when they are worried about their political freedoms.

Chris Patton said it best, "For the people of Hong Kong there is no comfort to the proposition that if China reduces their freedoms, their jobs will go to the United States."

GOP LEADERSHIP MUST NOT DELAY ONE MINUTE LONGER IN PASSING SUPPLEMENTAL EMERGENCY APPROPRIATIONS BILL

(Mr. STUPAK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, it was January when the Governors of three Midwestern States, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota, declared natural disasters in their States because of heavy snow. Residents of these States first faced the deadly dangers of terrible snowstorms and then tragically lost their homes and possessions to the ensuing floods.

It has been months of pain and suffering for these people in these States and their leadership, who have turned to the Federal Government for the assistance promised in our programs of emergency relief. There remain more than 5,000 citizens who are homeless, without relief, who need financial assistance now.

Why does the GOP leadership continue to play games with the supplemental emergency appropriations bill for even one minute? Apparently, the Republican leadership does not care about these folks. Democrats do care. We support a clean emergency appropriations bill.

To my Republican friends I say let us pass a supplemental emergency appropriations bill without the controversial nonemergency provisions. Let us pass a clean emergency appropriations bill today.

CONGRESS MUST PASS MEANINGFUL CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM OR BE EMBARRASSED TO FACE VOTERS IN 1998

(Mr. ALLEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, the 1996 elections involved more money, more TV ads, and more players than ever before. Not just candidates, but political parties and outside groups saturated the airwaves with political ads. What was the result? The lowest turnout in over 70 years.

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We know that 90 percent of the public wants fundamental campaign finance reform. We need to get big money out of campaigns. We need more accurate reporting, more accountability and more restrictions on campaign expenditures.

Loopholes have become highways for moving campaign funds. Outside groups participate in elections without adequate disclosure of their identities or their interests. The gentleman from Arkansas [Mr. HUTCHINSON] and I co-chair a bipartisan freshman task force trying to find common ground on this issue. I hope and believe we will come to a conclusion during this month. Then we must pass meaningful campaign finance reform or be embarrassed to face the voters in the 1998 elections.

THE MONEY LAUNDERING AND FINANCIAL CRIMES STRATEGY ACT OF 1997

(Ms. VELÁZQUEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, the explosion of finance crimes, money laundering, credit card fraud and counterfeiting is draining our communities of valuable resources.

For that reason, I introduced H.R. 1756, the Money Laundering and Financial Crimes Strategy Act. Under this bill Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies will at last be able to coordinate their efforts to combat this rising criminal tide.

The effect of this criminal activity is chilling. In my district there is a section of Roosevelt Avenue in Jackson Heights, Queens, that prosecutors and investigators call Ground Zero. That neighborhood is home to many hard-working families. It is also an area where an exploited wire transfer industry sends up to \$1.3 billion in illegal drug money abroad.

My colleagues, the effects of these crimes reach far beyond New York, Texas, California. Yet Congress has done little. As a partner in this war, it is time for Congress to send a clear message to these criminal organizations by cosponsoring H.R. 1756.

PASS A CLEAN DISASTER RELIEF BILL NOW

(Mr. STRICKLAND asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)